

**State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations**  
**INFORMATION RESOURCES MANAGEMENT BOARD**  
**Meeting Report**  
**August 21, 2003**

Member	Affiliation	Attended	
		Yes	No
Thomas Collins (Chair)	OLIS-RI Department of Administration	X	
Stephen Alves	RI Senate		X
Alice Barrows	Library Board of Rhode Island	X	
Gary Ciminero	RI House of Representatives—Policy Office	X	
William Ferland	Office of Higher Education		X
Nicholas Leporacci	RI Department of Mental Health, Retardation and Hospitals	X	
Janet Levesque	RI League of Cities and Towns	X	
Raymond McKay	City of Warwick		X
Peter McWalters	RI Department of Elementary and Secondary Education		X
Dexter Merry	Public Telecommunications Authority		X
James R. Monti, Jr.	West Warwick School District		X
Thomas Mullaney	Budget Office-RI Department of Administration		X
Marvin Perry	RI Department of Labor and Training	X	
A. T. Wall	RI Department of Corrections	X	
Christopher Wessells	University of Rhode Island	X	
James Willis	Secretary of State's Office	X	
Don Wolfe	Member-at-Large	X	
William Wray	Citizens Financial Group	X	
<b>Other Attendees</b>			
Warren Angell	RI Department of Environmental Management		
James Berard	RI Department of Corrections		
Howard Boksenbaum	OLIS-RI Department of Administration		
Carol Ciotola	OLIS-RI Department of Administration		
Joan Gammon	RI.gov		
Connie McGreavy	RI Water Resources Board		
Mark Treat	Fiscal Fitness Program		
Thomas Viall	New England Interactive (NEI)		

**Action Items—**

- **Draft Annual Report:** H. Boksenbaum will e-mail the draft to members, and any comments should be referred back to him. T. Collins will draft a cover letter for transmittal of the report, and this will be presented for Board review at the next meeting.
- **Portal Review Committee:** Members received copies of a Project Template, Project Priority Grid and Project Prioritization Sheet constituting the new project review process. Members were asked to review these documents and forward any comments/questions to J. Gammon.
- **Disposing of Prior Committees of the IRMB:** New committees will be created to assist the Board. Since several prior committees are still on record, T. Collins will take the necessary steps to dispose of them.
- **Proposal to have NEI work with the Division of Taxation to develop a business tax payment via Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and to authorize an enhanced fee of 95 cents per transaction for the list of tax types attached to the proposal—**W. Wray asked to revisit how the 95-cent charge was determined. J. Gammon will provide the report on this proposal for review at the next meeting. H. Boksenbaum will seek guidance from legal counsel with respect to the contract. T. Collins will review the contract as well.

- Motion to delegate authority to the CIO to proceed with projects that do not include fees—This motion did not receive a second. T. Collins will reword the motion for presentation to the Board in September.

#### **Approved Motions—**

1. The July 17 Meeting Report, as amended, was unanimously approved.
2. Members tabled action on the draft Annual Report until the September Board meeting.
3. The Board approved the creation of two subcommittees for the purpose of: (1) Developing a Five-Year Statewide Plan for Information Technology and (2) Developing an IT Architecture and Associated Standards.
4. The Board tabled a motion to delegate authority to the CIO to proceed with PRC recommended projects that do not include fees, and an amendment to allow the CIO to decide whether NEI can move ahead with projects, using the IRMB as a forum for agencies to redress decisions.
5. The Board provided conditional approval for NEI to work with the Division of Taxation to develop a business tax payment via Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and that an enhanced fee of 95 cents per transaction be authorized for the list of tax types that were attached to the proposal, with the stipulation that the Board will check to determine whether or not Board approval was required for this project and whether it will be required for similar projects in the future.

**Chair’s Report**—T. Collins: (1) distributed and reviewed the letter sent from the Governor to Bruce Reirden, a former IRMB member, thanking him for his dedicated efforts on behalf of the IRMB; (2) e-mailed to members OSHEAN’s PowerPoint presentation; (3) visited URI’s campus to learn about its programs and to tour its computer centers; and (4) encouraged members to continue to contact him between meetings with comments, suggestions, etc.

**July 17, 2003, Meeting Report**—T. Viall clarified Item (3) on page 3, under “Portal Review Committee Report,” as follows: “On the information side, RI.gov is in the process of being turned into a database-driven system.” *M. Perry moved to approve the July 17, 2003, Meeting Report, as amended; J. Willis seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.*

**Draft Annual Report**—H. Boksenbaum distributed and reviewed the draft report. T. Collins stated that in addition to forwarding the report, he would communicate to the Governor, Legislature and IRMB via a cover letter the future direction of this Board and how challenges will be addressed.

- M. Treat stated that this report pertains mostly to OLIS activities. Clarification should be made between issues that relate solely to OLIS and those that include other state agencies.
- D. Wolfe stated that the IRMB did mainly focus on OLIS activities and felt that this should be acknowledged in the report, together with the Fiscal Fitness Program’s plan to expand IRMB’s scope.
- T. Collins agreed. His cover letter will state that this report covered a period of time prior to his tenure and will then present his plans to shift the Board’s scope.

*Members by unanimous consent tabled action on this report until the next Board meeting.*

H. Boksenbaum will e-mail the draft to members, and any comments should be referred to him. T. Collins will draft a cover letter for transmittal of the report, which will be presented to the Board for review at its next meeting.

**Portal Review Committee (PRC) Report**—The General Manager’s Report was distributed for members’ information. Mr. Boksenbaum reported that NEI and RI.gov are working with the CIO and the Fiscal Fitness Program to develop new ways to report on financials and on how projects are

submitted, reviewed and prioritized. He distributed and reviewed a Project Template, Project Priority Grid and Project Prioritization Sheet to demonstrate how the new process would work.

- J. Willis felt this process a helpful tool for those agencies that will need to present project proposals to the Committee. It provides criteria for Committee scoring, and it is key to an efficient process. H. Boksenbaum agreed, noting that transparency must be built into this process.
- M. Treat, noted the limited resources of Portal revenues and cited the need to manage those resources to receive the best value for the State and to grow the Portal. He also recommended that the CIO be delegated authority to approve projects that are not fee based. H. Boksenbaum, noting that the Board is still in the beginning stages of rethinking this whole process, asked members to consider this recommendation as this work proceeds.

H. Boksenbaum asked members to review these documents and provide any comments/questions to J. Gammon at RI.gov.

**Fiscal Fitness Program (FFP) IT Activities**—M. Treat reported that FFP is reviewing IT infrastructure across state agencies. In this regard, FFP is working closely with the CIO. Committee recommendations will be presented in the fall. Cost-saving measures and long-term planning will be addressed later. Lastly, he presented examples of the types of data being collected with respect to the workings of IT operations within state agencies.

- G. Ciminero asked if the FFP was dealing solely with the Executive Branch. T. Collins explained that it was, but in this case the Executive Branch constitutes what is commonly referred to as those that report to the Governor, excluding those that were independently elected.
- G. Ciminero asked if the agencies were underestimating inventories, because the numbers presented appeared to be low. M. Treat explained that the gaps in data reflect pending survey results. FFP's initial findings are that there is a non-essential IT unit, no consistency with respect to project management, no methodology, and serious issues regarding documentation. Cost benefits and cost savings are being reviewed; and as the Committees move forward, they will focus on the long-term architecture issues. It will be important to develop a new management process as new IT projects are planned. The most critical issue is the lack of coordination between business and technology aspects.
- D. Wolfe stated the importance of obtaining executive ownership with respect to these projects. If achieved, the executive could then be held accountable for the project's success or failure.

**Communications Working Group (CWG) Report**—H. Boksenbaum reported that this Group focused its first year's efforts on radio communications. (1) The Group recommended that the Department of Health use Centers for Disease (CDC) grant funds to add 16 hospital radio installations to the RITERN 800 MHz radio network, as well as to upgrade, replace, or install HEAR radios at those hospitals. (2) The consultant completed his interviews and is preparing summaries and analyses of communication needs. He will present his communications report in mid-September. (3) A Homeland Security grant was offered to Rhode Island. The State prepared a grant application for \$5.9 million to create a comprehensive communications network in Washington County. (4) DOH, EMA, the Secretary of State and DOA-OLIS have joined together to contract with RINET to extend the State's data communications capability to municipal buildings. Community briefing sessions were scheduled for September, and CDC is preparing a videoconference on how to deal with crises involving small pox or a similar disease. This video will target school nurses and clinical staff.

- D. Wolfe asked if this Group had any interaction with amateur radio organizations. H. Boksenbaum spoke about a slightly negative interaction. The State has a contract with a vendor to install the 800 MHz radios for which specific data regarding frequencies, etc., are involved. When this vendor installed radios, sensitive information was posted to an Internet News Group, enabling people to

listen to particular talk groups. These groups were configured so as to keep them confidential for security reasons. For this reason, the Group voiced concern to the vendor; and the issued was rectified.

- M. Treat asked who pays for the operation of these systems once federal funding is depleted and who handles procurement of the equipment. H. Boksenbaum stated that EMA will provide funds to maintain the systems via contract funding; the State Police will manage the radio system; and T. Marcello, on loan from the Controller's Office at DOA, is responsible for procurement of radio equipment.

**New Business**—T. Collins announced that he has engaged a consultant to assess the Operations Center in Johnston. The consultant will assess operating costs, budgetary estimates for relocation to a new facility, and outsourcing options. The Forrester Group was chosen to perform this work at a cost of \$20,000. He presented his reasons for selecting Forrester over Gartner and Meta, the other two bidders. The Fiscal Fitness Program is also reviewing this issue, as well as other state activities on state-owned property. By the end of this year, FFP will have a fairly firm direction on how to proceed with the Johnston facility and on how best to deal with other data centers. The need for a disaster recovery plan will also be addressed.

**Old Business**—J. Willis announced that the statewide e-mail address book that he developed would be presented to the Webmakers' Group on August 26. As a way to insure that all agencies participate, the directory can be used by an agency only if said agency has provided data to the system. The directory will be updated and maintained as a normal course of business. He cited the need to transfer DOA's information, currently maintained in a word document, into a compatible format for use in this system.

- T. Collins noted that J. Willis was working on a significant project—Business Fast Start. J. Willis explained that the Secretary of State has been legislatively mandated to create a tool that would allow people to more easily establish businesses. He then explained the process involved.
- W. Wray asked how users would obtain the status of the submitted forms. J. Willis explained the different stages of workflow for the agencies involved in this pilot project—Department of Health, the Division of Taxation and the Secretary of State's Office. The Secretary of State's Office will handle its forms electronically, while the Department of Health's and the Division of Taxation's back-office systems would be handled via paper or e-mail. W. Wray noted that users signing up for this service would expect certain results. M. Treat noted that through the pilot project, issues would surface. Addressing these issues could move this system towards automation on the back end.
- G. Ciminero noted that at present statistical tax information is not available online. He asked if there would be changes in this area. W. Wary termed this a data architecture issue. M. Treat explained that Fiscal Fitness is attempting to initiate this type of high-level process.

**New Business—Recommendation to form two Subcommittees**—T. Collins distributed and reviewed a document entitled "IT Governance, A Process for Rational Decision Making."

*T. Collins moved to recommend that two subcommittees be formed for the purpose of: (1) developing a Five-Year Statewide Plan for Information Technology and (2) developing an IT Architecture and Associated Standards.*

He explained that the subcommittees would be populated with IT staff throughout state government, as well as appropriate information technology individuals that could bring a broader public perspective to these committees. He also plans to seek assistance from members of the IT Task Force. This group of executives came together through the development of the Governor's Transition Teams.

*M. Perry seconded the motion.*

- G. Ciminero asked if there were “best IT practices” written for government. T. Collins announced that he would be attending the National Association of State Chief Information Officers in September and will be also be querying NASCIO members on that subject. There may be a model to follow with respect to statements of principle and standards for planning. Copies of five-year plans are also available on some state web sites.
- G. Ciminero asked if those with a government perspective should be included in the Committee mix. T. Collins replied that the State would reach out to these and other resources.
- D. Wolfe noted that the Board in the past had formed planning and standards committees. Both were successful in producing results. He endorsed drawing from outside sources to assist the Board through these committees.

T. Collins cited the need to dispose of those committees still on record and to update the five-year plan. This plan in the past did not represent all IT initiatives of the Executive Branch. This needs to be addressed. There is also the need to find commonality among state agencies and to begin to look at areas of technology solutions that span multiple agencies. This Board needs to form the planning function to review issues prospectively and to deal with them as they emerge in the planning framework.

*The motion was unanimously approved.*

**Approval of PRC Recommendations**—M. Treat recommended that these approvals be delegated to the CIO when fees are not involved in project proposals.

*A.T. Wall moved to delegate authority to the CIO to proceed with PRC recommended projects that do not include fees. The CIO could be asked to report on the status of those projects at each Board meeting. The Board would act only on projects that include a convenience fee. D. Wolfe seconded the motion.*

*J. Willis amended the motion to allow the CIO to decide whether NEI can move ahead with projects, and use the IRMB as a forum for agencies redress decisions.*

- H. Boksenbaum felt there was value in allowing agency representatives to appear before the Portal Review Committee prior to delegating approval authority to the CIO.
- T. Collins recommended rephrasing the motion to grant authority to the CIO to approve or deny recommendations of the PRC.
- M. Treat suggested that the CIO’s denial of a project would allow for an agency to appeal his decision to the Board. T. Collins suggested that this motion be reworded for Board’s review and approval at its next meeting.

*Neither the motion nor its amendment was seconded.*

**Portal Review Committee Recommendations to the Board**—The first two: (1) to approve the Business Fast Start Project and (2) to approve the DMV Website Project were not acted on. The third was to recommend that the Board approve NEI’s plan to work with the Division of Taxation to develop a business tax payment via Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and to authorize an enhanced fee of 95 cents per transaction for the tax types as presented in a list that was distributed at the meeting.

- D. Wolfe asked for a comparison between the past and current fees. M. Treat replied that the former vendor charged \$5,000 per month for this service; whereas, NEI will charge \$2,000 for this service with the same volume of traffic. H. Boksenbaum explained the process involved. J. Gammon

explained that there is no convenience fee involved, because the Division of Taxation was able legislatively to absorb the 95-cent fee to the vendor.

- M. Treat asked if this was a Board decision, since the 95 cents constitutes an internal cost to Taxation and not a convenience fee to users. J. Gammon replied that the PRC sets fees, and this Board is responsible for their approval. Due to the confusion about the approval process for such fees, H. Boksenbaum will seek guidance from legal counsel with respect to the contract. T. Collins stated that the Board is responsible for managing the relationship between NEI and the State; and as such, must approve any convenience fees charged. He, too, will review the contract.
- D. Wolfe suggested tabling action until the next Board meeting. T. Collins asked whether or not this application could “go live” without Board approval.

*G. Ciminero moved to provide conditional approval for NEI to work with the Division of Taxation to develop a business tax payment via Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and that an enhanced fee of 95 cents per transaction be authorized for the list of tax types that were attached to the proposal, with the stipulation that the Board will check to determine whether or not Board approval was required for this project and whether it will be required for similar projects in the future.*

- W. Wray asked to revisit how the 95-cent charge was determined. J. Gammon stated that she would provide the report prepared for this project for review at the next Board meeting.

*W. Wray seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.*

**Next Meeting**—Thursday, September 18, 2003, at 3 p.m. at the Department of Administration Building—Fiscal Fitness Program’s Conference Room, 4<sup>th</sup> floor.